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## THE SUPERVISION OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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ELMER HARRISON WILDS  
State Normal School, Platteville, Wisconsin

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The following investigation was made with the purpose in view of devising a method for the supervision of extra-curricular activities in the high school that could be applied universally to all types and sizes of high schools and solve the many evils connected with the administration of the manifold forms of these activities as found in our schools. Three sources of material were used in this investigation: (1) the literature on this phase of school administration; (2) reports by school principals on question blanks submitted at random to a large number of high schools; (3) reports in the form of personal letters from a number of principals who were known to be interested in this phase of high-school administration.

From the literature, especially from the *Proceedings of the National Education Association* and various school journals, were obtained descriptions of many pioneer experiments in the supervision of extra-curricular activities. From the question-blank reports it was possible to determine statistically such questions as (1) the extent of extra-curricular activities in the schools, (2) the evils that exist in connection with these activities, and (3) the various types of administration that are being used. Personal letters were written to a number of high-school principals who were known to have an active interest in the problem or to have recently inaugurated new schemes of administration. From this source came many descriptions of recent experiments. As a result of this investigation, it was found possible to devise and put into operation the plan of supervision described in this article, a plan which I am convinced can be used as the basis of a well-organized, standardized scheme of supervision, adaptable to all schools.

It is impossible to reproduce in this article the details of the statistical results of the investigation. A few general conclusions,

however, may be noted, especially with regard to the extent of extra-curricular activities and to the prevalence of evils in connection with them.

1. Of the schools reporting, 13 were large schools, with a median enrolment of 1,220 and a median number of teachers, 54; 50 were small schools, the median enrolment being 207 and the median number of teachers, 10. Yet it is significant to note that there is little difference between these two groups of schools with regard to the number of activities, the median number of activities being 15.7 for the large schools and 13.5 for the small schools. When one realizes that it takes as many students, as a rule, for each form of activity in the small school as in the large school, and as many teachers to control them properly under the present system of administration, one can readily see the main reason for the prevalence of evils as found. The remedy must be either to cut down the number of activities or to formulate a new scheme of administration. Since these activities are all of such great educational value, the latter is the remedy to be applied.

2. In all the schools there is a tendency to stress certain forms of activities at the expense of others equally important. The older forms of activities are engaged in and stressed at the expense of newer forms that really have as much or more educational value for the pupils.

3. Evils were found to be much less prevalent in schools where some attempt was being made to adopt new methods of supervision. This shows that the evils can be remedied by intelligent efforts at correct supervision.

4. The following evils were found to exist to a greater or less degree in the various schools:

- Duplication of activities by different organizations
- Excessive expenditures of money by organizations and by individuals
- Duplicated purchases by different organizations
- Waste of supplies and equipment
- Conflicts in scheduling dates for events
- Interference by out-of-school organizations
- Limitations in number of students participating
- Overloading of work upon a few students
- Neglect of curricular work for extra-curricular activities

Lack of centralized authority  
Too much burden upon principal  
Difficulty of securing teachers capable or willing to supervise  
Lack of adequate faculty supervision  
Lack of means for compensating teachers for such supervision  
Development of cliques and small partisan groups

5. The evils that predominate are those connected with participation. Overloading and consequent neglect of curricular work is most common. An average of 15.5 per cent take part in more than three forms of activities. Only four schools report attempts at restricting participation. There is also a great limitation in participation shown. An average of 29.2 per cent is reported as taking part in no form of activity. The second commonest type of problem is the difficulty of securing teachers capable or willing to act as sponsors, and also the inability to compensate teachers for this extra work. The third common group of evils is financial. These financial troubles could all be remedied by centralizing the handling of money in one responsible person, and by the use of a budget and voucher system.

Many experiments have been evolved by principals and teachers from their desire to handle these problems in the best possible way, and many of these experiments have succeeded admirably in lessening the evils mentioned above. Some have been reported in detail in the school journals but many of the best experiments have not been published. I am describing some of the most typical of these experiments here in order to show what has already been done in the way of solving this very important problem in secondary education.

One of the very first attempts to work out a new plan of administration is reported by Principal Keller, of the Manitowoc (Wisconsin) High School. In reporting his experiment, Mr. Keller says:

It is clear that we must reach outside the school to get the grip on our boys and girls which we must have to get lasting results, not so much as to mind training, but as to heart training.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Keller has realized the principle of natural instinct and says that the way to begin is to take such interests as the students show

<sup>1</sup> Paul G. W. Keller, *School Review*, XIII (1905), 10-14.

and develop them, thus building up activities which will take most of their leisure time. His organizations are based on that principle:

1. For those interested in expression—an expressive Reading Club, under the direction of the teacher of English.
2. For those interested in music—Orchestra, Boys' Glee Club, Girls' Glee Club, under the direction of the teacher of music.
3. For those interested in business activities—management of school paper and athletic teams.
4. For those interested in literary work—Associated Press Club, for clipping news, pictures, etc., under the direction of two members of the faculty.
5. For those interested in athletics—Athletic Association and teams.
6. For those interested in entertainment—Lecture Bureaus managed by students under faculty supervision.

In this experiment we see two innovations, the appeal to interests and the use of the faculty sponsor system.

A plan of administration that was worked out about the same time as the Manitowoc plan was described in an address by the principal of Erasmus Hall High School, in Brooklyn, before the National Education Association in 1910. The speaker among other things said:

In no school in the country is there a greater number of student activities than in the Erasmus Hall High School. Since its foundation it has welcomed every organization and every activity the purpose of which was a good one. The policy of the school is uniformly one of approval and encouragement, the only restriction being that a member of the faculty be selected to be responsible in a general way for the organization.

The presidents of the various classes and organizations have been organized into a Congress of Presidents. The work of the different organizations is unified in the General Organization, which finances the various activities, and is composed of practically the entire student body. All the usual evils are removed by this General Organization control. Abuse of privilege or hostility is eliminated. The principal believes thoroughly in all the various forms of extra-curricular student activities.

The results of the policy are noticeable. (1) There is a fine personal and friendly spirit existing between faculty and students. (2) There is a great spirit of loyalty to the school on the part of students and graduates. (3) There is a very small percentage of school mortality. The teachers by entering heartily into the work have been amply repaid. The pupils have a better attitude toward teachers who have worked with them in their outside activities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wm. R. Lasher, *Proceedings of the National Education Association* (1910), pp. 445-50.

A number of steps in advance are seen here, especially in the attempt at unification through the Congress of Presidents and the General Organization, and in the close faculty supervision.

The Trenton (New Jersey) High School, under Principal A. Wetzel, worked out and adopted with great success its faculty director system. The principal describes its workings and its success:

Every student organization in our high school is under the care of a faculty director. Of course, the success of this arrangement depends upon the wisdom and tact he displays. If he poses as an autocrat, he will get into trouble, and so will the organization, but if he acts as an elder brother and advisor, the pupils will soon see that the arrangement works to their benefit and will accept the arrangement as most satisfactory.<sup>1</sup>

To ascertain the feelings of the students concerning the office of faculty director, Mr. Wetzel asked a number of them to state their opinions in writing. The following were given as advantages of the faculty director:

For literary societies:

1. It results in serious effort to carry out the purposes of the society; it elevates the work to a dignified plane.
2. The pupils receive valuable criticism from the faculty director; they accept criticism more readily from him than from fellow-pupils.
3. Pupils cannot shirk and allow a few to do all the work.

For high-school magazine:

1. Pupils are more willing to submit articles for the school paper, for with a faculty advisor they know their names will not appear in connection with a discreditable performance.

For athletics:

1. The withdrawal of the faculty director would result in a shortage of funds.
2. Our athletic director does not let our enthusiasm at the beginning of the season get too strong, but makes it extend throughout the year.

Surely these student answers are the best possible arguments for the success of careful faculty supervision. The warning concerning the temperament required in a faculty director should be noted. We have already observed that schools find it very difficult to secure teachers capable or willing to do this work, especially without remuneration.

<sup>1</sup> A. Wetzel, *School Review*, XIII (1905), 429-33.

Prescott, Arizona, was the first school to report the development of informal social gatherings. In addition to the various athletic games, the school has a number of informal musicals—gathering groups around a piano, and every Fiday afternoon holds an informal dance for all the school.

Miss Gibbs, in reporting this experiment, says it has two desirable results:

(1) A spirit of democracy is fostered, which is very important in this era of class distinction and class struggle, and no institution is better fitted to bring it about than the public high school; and (2) it occasions a very desirous attitude between pupils and teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The University High School, in Chicago, was also active early in developing the informal social life. Extra-curricular activities have always received careful attention and the school has always been noted for its wealth of activities and its plan of careful faculty supervision. The main feature of its plan is the use of faculty committees. Principal Johnson describes the scheme as follows:

All the activities are in charge of four faculty committees: (1) Athletics and Games, (2) Literary Clubs, (3) Science and Arts Clubs, (4) Student Publications. The following rules have been adopted:

1. All clubs must have faculty advisors.
2. No club can hold its meetings in the evenings.
3. New clubs to be formed must obtain the approval of the appropriate faculty committee.<sup>2</sup>

It is thus apparent that all activities are under careful supervision. The school publishes a manual of rules or *Students Handbook* which can be secured by addressing the principal. The school is unique in having a clubhouse for boys and clubrooms for girls. There are also Friday afternoon informal dances.

Jesse B. Davis, principal of the Central High School of Grand Rapids, Michigan, has probably come the nearest to working out a closely unified and correlated plan of administration. His plan may be briefly outlined as follows:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Louise Gibbs, *School Review*, XVII (1909), 634-37.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. Johnson, *School Review*, XVII (1909), 665-80.

<sup>3</sup> This plan is described more fully in Mr. Davis' book, *Vocational and Moral Guidance* (Ginn & Co.), pp. 119 ff. A copy of the printed rules governing extra-curricular activities can probably be secured by addressing Mr. Davis.

*Advisory Board.*—Every society or organization has its advisory board, consisting of two teachers who are chosen by the pupils and approved by the principal, and of two or more students, according to the size of the organization. The teachers on the board act as leaders. The principal is a member of the board *ex officio*.

*Advisory Council.*—The teachers on the various boards may be brought together by the principal as an advisory council to deal with difficult problems and determine the general social policy of the school.

*Student Council.*—The students who are members of the various boards, and also certain students chosen at large to represent those who may not be members of any society, act as a student council. This council is used to secure the good will and loyal support of the general student body for the administration of the school.

*Leadership Clubs.*—The principal calls together the boys of the student council and the lady vice-principal, the girls, to discuss in an intimate way the problems of leadership.

All activities are classified into five groups: (1) the Academic Group, (2) the Arts Group, (3) the Athletic Group, (4) the Social Group, (5) the General Group. No pupil is allowed to belong to more than one organization under the same group at the same time. No pupil is allowed to hold office in more than one organization at the same time.

This is the most effective plan I know in providing for a control of student participation so as to prevent a few students from monopolizing all the activities and keeping others out altogether.

Edward Rynearson, principal of the Fifth Avenue High School of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has worked out, as a solution for this same problem of limited participation and overloading, the following scheme of majors and minors:

1. In order that the activities may be selected with discrimination, they are grouped as major and minor activities.

MAJOR	MINOR
Baseball	Camera Club
Basket-ball	Commercial Club
Class play	Debating Society
Debating teams	German Club
Football	Journal staff
Journal staff	Reporters
Business manager	Literary Society
Editor-in-chief	Mathematics Club
Literary editor	Penmanship Club
Soccer football	Technical Club
Society play	
Swimming team	
Track	



2. A pupil whose scholarship, strength, and conduct permit, may belong to one major and two minors concurrently, or to three minors concurrently. No pupil may belong to more than one major at the same time.

V. E. Logan, principal of the high school at Armour, South Dakota, is experimenting with a unique plan of compulsory participation. In a personal letter, he describes the plan, as follows:

Each teacher has charge of at least one branch of student activities and gives a grade in it just the same as in any other course. A very careful record is kept, and this is copied into the permanent record.

Each year a student is required to make one credit in student activities along with the regular academic work. Failure to do this results in an incomplete record for the year just the same as a failure in any other course.

This year we have allowed one half a credit on each of the following: football, boys' basket-ball, boys' glee club, girls' basket-ball, girls' glee club, physical training, and program. The program is rather unsettled. We allow a student to give a reading or several of them can give a little play for which they get whatever credit we think it worth. Usually they are given a half-credit for program. This work is done at the regular assembly period.

Some of the experiments consist, not so much in the organization of a scheme of administration, as in the cultivation of a certain spirit. Miss Anna Wilson, of the high school at Crawfordsville, Indiana, writes of a plan there which might aptly be called the "family idea."

It has ever been my desire to make the high-school days the most hopeful and happy of all days, and our school is always spoken of as "the family," a possible idea with an enrolment of between three and four hundred. We have at least three "family reunions" a year, when as many as possible of our college "older brothers and sisters" and those about us come back to sing with us "Auld Lang Syne" and celebrate our triumphs. Those occasions are at the beginning of the year when the "younger children" (the Freshmen) are introduced and welcomed and the college people are wished success for the year's work, at the Christmas holidays, and at Commencement week, with the farewells to the Seniors and the Alumni Banquet.

Everything exists for the good of the family as a whole, and most difficulties are settled in "family conferences." We meet as a family for devotional exercises twice a week. Every two weeks we have meetings of boys and girls separately, to consider and discuss questions of health, morals, proper behavior, etc. The boys have their athletic teams, and of course we have literary and debating societies, press club, glee club, orchestra, and chorus—besides a committee on social affairs.

The high schools of Detroit, in a somewhat similar manner, have been developing a family spirit by the use of their "house" scheme of organization. J. Remsen Bishop, principal of Eastern High School, writes:

In some of our high schools, the "House" idea prevails, the pupils being gathered into groups, segregating the sexes. At Eastern High School, however, the policy is to avoid such separation. Our grade-room principals are men and women of keen insight and warm sympathies. They are really friendly advisors to their pupils over whom they have charge, in addition to being executive officers. This seems to bring about a family feeling and many group activities develop from time to time.

You inquire about our school organizations. We have all the usual organizations and activities, but our chief endeavor is to develop the social life of the school through what we call "grade-room parties." We have six grade rooms in this school, averaging two hundred to the room. The grade principal then appoints a committee to manage the affair. The committee sends the invitations to faculty and parents; it arranges for music and refreshments, and in general the members have excellent practice in perfecting the details of such an entertainment. The benefits observed so far by the teachers are an improvement in the social manners of the children, and a more cordial feeling toward the teachers of the school on the part of the pupils.

Many schools are coming to use the plan known as the "sponsor" system of faculty supervision. This plan has been utilized to its fullest extent and perhaps has been most successful in the Kansas City (Kansas) High School. Here every one of the innumerable organizations and activities is under the complete control of a member of the faculty, known as the sponsor. I give here a few of the organizations from the sponsors of which I have received complete reports concerning their work: the Nature Club; the German Club; the Classical Club (*Societa Classica*); Sketch Club; *Le Cercle Français*; the Boys Club; Radio Association.

Chester B. Curtis, principal of the Central High School, St. Louis, which uses this same scheme, in commenting on the plan in his school, points out the difficulty prevalent with this plan. He writes,

Each organization has a sponsor who is my representative and at the same time directs the organization to the extent of his or her presence and by giving advice.

Extra-curricular activities require a vast amount of time for teachers whose services are *voluntary*. We have no means of compensation. Sponsors are

usually younger members of the faculty anxious to do an extra bit to aid in the always hoped-for promotion.

J. F. Wellemeyer, principal at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, writes concerning his attempt at unification through a "general club chairman" and a "central committee":

All work is under faculty committees with large powers. That is, the faculty sponsor or chairman always has the veto power. There is a general club chairman and a central committee which passes upon and unifies all financial affairs.

Dates are placed upon the calendar by authority of the principal alone. Our system is almost perfect.

Several schools have organized school banks, and a few are using these as a centralizing agency for the financial side of extra-curricular activities. George Buck, principal of the Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, writes concerning their plan there in this respect:

All financial affairs are managed by a voucher system, through our rental library office, which is in charge of the Commercial Department.

A very interesting scheme has just been inaugurated at the high school in Little Rock, Arkansas to prevent the too rapid multiplication of activities. It might be called the "charter plan."

No society or class is allowed to form an organization until a charter is granted by the principal.

At West Technical High School, Cleveland, a dual form of administration has just been adopted that somewhat approaches my ideal of a perfect scheme. The principal writes:

The organization of all boys' activities is under the direction of a Faculty Manager, who schedules all games and transacts all business. Girls' activities are similarly organized under a woman Faculty Manager.

This scheme approaches the ideal of having one person, other than the principal, in charge of all extra-curricular activities, the plan which I shall discuss later.

These experiments in the administration of extra-curricular activities which I have reviewed have accomplished much in the way of solving certain of the problems, but each of them has a vital defect. All fail in one respect—they have no *one* responsible head

over all these organizations, around and in whom they may be unified and centered. The principal cannot act in this capacity. There are too many other administrative and executive duties upon

TABULAR VIEW OF EXPERIMENTS IN ADMINISTRATION OF  
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School	Principal	Characteristic Feature
Manitowoc High School Manitowoc, Wis.	Paul G. W. Keller	Appeal to Natural Interests Use of Faculty Supervision
Erasmus Hall High School Brooklyn, N.Y.	William R. Lasher	Congress of Presidents General Organization
Trenton High School Trenton, N.J.	A. Wetzel	Faculty Director
Prescott High School Prescott, Ariz.	Louise Gibbs	Informal Social Group
University High School Chicago, Ill.	F. W. Johnson	The Faculty Committee The Clubhouse
Central High School Grand Rapids, Mich.	Jesse B. Davis	Attempt at Unification Advisory Boards
Fifth Avenue High School Pittsburgh, Pa.	Edward Rynearson	Major and Minor Plan
Armour High School Armour, S.D.	V. E. Logan	Compulsory Participation School Credit
Crawfordsville High School Crawfordsville, Ind.	Anna Wilson	The School as a Family
Eastern High School Detroit, Mich.	J. Remsen Bishop	The "House" Idea
Oklahoma City High School Oklahoma City, Okla.	J. F. Wellemeyer	General Club Chairman Central Committee
Shortridge High School Indianapolis, Ind.	George Buck	The School Bank
Little Rock High School Little Rock, Ark.	J. A. Larson	The School Charter
West Technical High School Cleveland, Ohio	R. L. Short	Faculty Manager

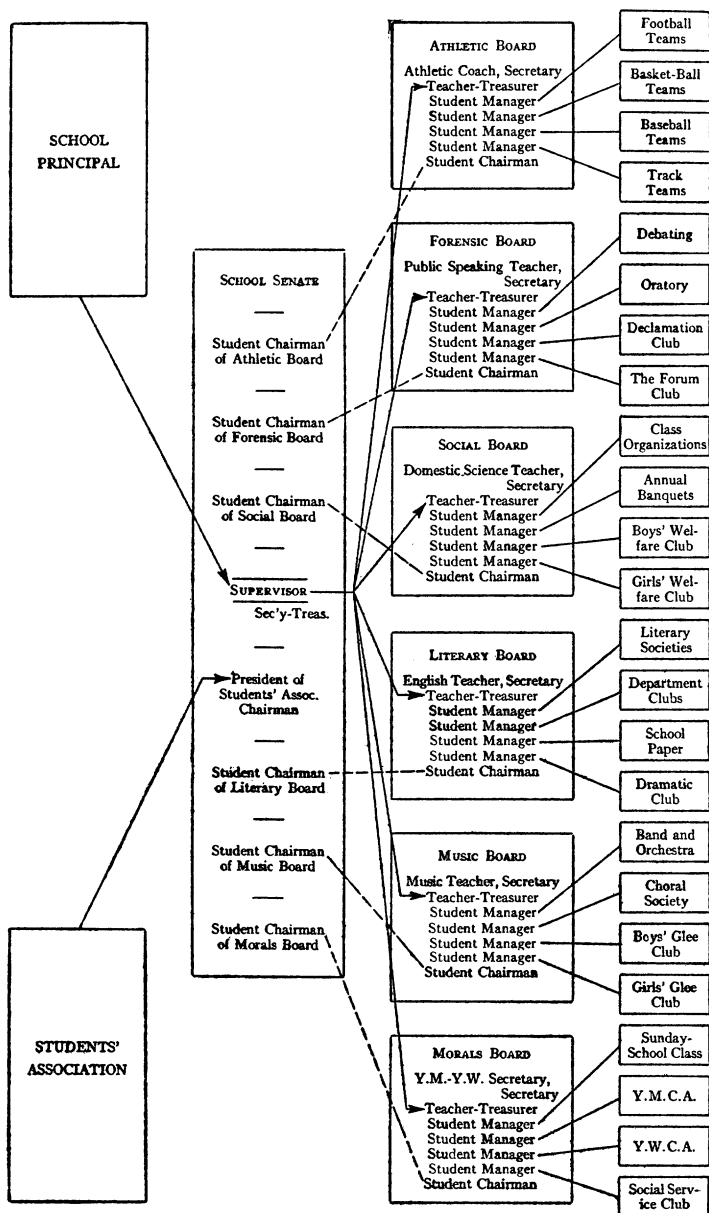
his shoulders. Our study of the extent and the evils of extra-curricular activities seems to make clear that there is a vital need for a new administrative officer in the high school—an officer who may be called a supervisor of extra-curricular activities, and who will devote all his time and energy to the direction and control of these valuable aids to educational training.

Bearing in mind the evils that have been found to exist, and in the light of the experience and experiments in other schools, I have set about to devise a solution. We need some plan of centralization and unification in which one person of the proper training and temperament would have complete and direct supervision over these activities, and yet where policies could be determined by the principal and the students. We have been helped in our work by a study of the city manager plan of municipal government. Our plan is modeled somewhat after the city manager plan. The principal and students together form the policy-determining body, but an expert supervisor performs all the executive functions, assisted by a small representative senate, the work being carried on under his direction through a number of closely correlated boards. The extent to which the work is unified and systematized may be seen by a glance at the chart which has been prepared to illustrate the scheme.

The general organization of the student body, of which every student is automatically a member, is known as the Students' Association. Each year this body elects a president and this office is considered the highest honor that can come to a member of the student body. The president of the Students' Association acts also as chairman of the School Senate.

The School Senate is the unifying body of the entire scheme. In this organization are centered all the extra-curricular activities of the school. It is composed of eight members, the six student chairmen of the six boards, the president of the Students' Association who acts as chairman, and the Supervisor of Extra-Curricular Activities, who acts as secretary-treasurer of the Senate.

The supervisor is the keynote to the whole scheme. He must be, beyond everything else, a leader of leaders, with tact, sympathy, and attractive personality. He must be a student of modern aims and purposes in education, with a broad social vision. He must have the faculty of getting down into the lives of the boys and girls so that they will trust him and have utmost confidence in his advice. He must be alive to his opportunity of training the students for physical, social, moral, and civic efficiency—to mold them for well-rounded and useful lives.



A PLAN FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In the small school the supervisor could do the actual coaching of the various activities, but in the larger schools specialists will work under his direction along the lines of each of the various activities.

There are six boards with four activities under each board:

1. Athletic Board—football, basket-ball, baseball, track.
2. Forensic Board—debating, oratory, declamation, forum.
3. Social Board—class organizations, banquets, Girls' Welfare Club, Boys' Welfare Club.
4. Literary Board—literary societies, department clubs, school paper, Dramatic Club.
5. Music Board—band and orchestra, Choral Society, Boys' Glee Club, Girls' Glee Club.
6. Morals Board—Sunday-school classes, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Social-Service Club.

Each board is made up of seven members: the student managers of the four activities under the direction of the board, the student chairman, appointed by the president of the Students' Association, a teacher appointed by the supervisor, who acts as his financial agent, and the coach or director from the faculty, who acts as secretary and arranges all schedules subject to the approval of the supervisor who is a member *ex officio* of all boards.

One of the most valuable results of this scheme of having certain teachers interested is the correlation of the outside activities with various subjects of the school curriculum. Such a correlation is plainly seen in the fields of music, drama, and journalism. These subjects belong to legitimate and essential fields of academic training and yet they relate themselves directly to the social life of both the school and the larger community unit. Other examples of possible correlation should be easily recognized.

The difficult problem of finance is handled very easily under this scheme. Each board draws up a budget at the beginning of each year based on its probable financial needs. The supervisor, on the basis of these budgets, with the assistance of the Senate, fixes the rate of assessment to be laid upon the student body and makes the appropriation for each board. The board apportionment is paid out at the discretion of the board, but the money is handled

by the supervisor and only paid out on signed orders from the financial agent on the board. A continual check is thus kept on all expenditures.

During its year of operation this plan has been exceptionally successful. The evils mentioned above have disappeared, and tendencies toward others have been checked. Such a plan ought to be exceedingly successful anywhere in giving the training that should come from participation in extra-curricular activities, without incurring the evils which we found to exist in our schools. I am confident that it can be applied to any size or type of school and that it will solve this intricate problem of secondary-school administration.

Our plan has not only proved successful in practice, but it has the sanction of expert opinion. In the report of the *Cleveland Educational Survey*, published last year, Mr. George Johnson, who conducted the survey of the recreational aspects of the school system, after stating that the administration of recreation in the schools included practically the whole public-school corps from the superintendent to the janitor, an organization loose and indefinite, without interrelations or mutual responsibility, recommends that in the Cleveland school system, as in that of every large, progressive city, there should be an officer whose entire time should be devoted to giving a social interpretation to educational work, and an educational interpretation to social work. He should know the general fields of sociology and education and should know intimately the special fields of play and recreation. He should be to the social functions of the school what the superintendent is to the academic work.<sup>1</sup>

That gives us a clear and adequate statement of the function of the officer in the high school whom I have designated as the Supervisor of Extra-Curricular Activities: *He should be to the social activities of the school what the principal is to the academic activities.*

<sup>1</sup> George Johnson, *Cleveland Educational Survey*, Sectional Report on "Education through Recreation."